**Birchmeadow Centre**

**Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Plan**

**Fire Safety Policy**

It is the policy of the Birchmeadow Centre Management Committee to take all reasonable measures to prevent fires in the Birchmeadow Centre through the provision and maintenance of adequate fire prevention equipment and measures, assessments of fire risk and proper working practices and procedures.

Further, in the event of a fire or reported fire, it is the Birchmeadow Centre Management Committee’s policy to ensure the safety of all occupants of the Birchmeadow Centre as the first priority and to achieve this through the provision of appropriate operational procedures, including training.

**Emergency Plan**

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This Emergency Plan has been prepared to provide guidance to staff (ie persons acting on behalf of the Management Committee of the Birchmeadow Centre) and all other responsible persons acting on behalf of users of the Centre, on essential aspects of fire safety including other emergencies requiring its evacuation.

1.2 It includes the following information:

* how people will be warned if there is a fire (Section 2) ;
* what staff should do if they discover a fire, including how the evacuation of the premises should be carried out (Section 3);
* arrangements for the safe evacuation of people identified as being especially at risk, such as those with disabilities and children (Section 3);
* how the fire and rescue service and any other necessary services will be called and who will be responsible for doing this (Section 3);
* identification of escape routes (Section 4);
* arrangements for fighting fire (Section 5), and:
* what training employees need and the arrangements for ensuring that this training is given.

1.3 Accordingly, this Plan is intended to provide the necessary guidance for all persons who are responsible for ensuring the safety of all persons attending an event or function at the Centre. This will, therefore, include:

i) staff and/or

ii) persons acting on behalf of groups or organisations who hire room(s) within the Centre for their own purposes, particularly when no members of staff are present.

**1.4 All responsible persons who are unfamiliar with the Birchmeadow Centre MUST therefore familiarise themselves with this Emergency Plan and with the layout of the building, its escape routes and the fire safety equipment before the event in question takes place.**

1.5 Responsible persons should ensure that no fire exits are obstructed in any way.

1.6 All responsible persons must have access to a charged mobile phone with sufficient signal strength to make emergency calls whenever necessary.

**2.0 Warning in the Event of a Fire**

2.1 The principal means of giving fire warnings in the Centre are the linked smoke detectors and red break-glass Fire Alarm Call Points located in throughout the building as shown diagrammatically on the attached floor plans.

**3.0 In the Event of Discovering a Fire**

3.1 In the event of discovering a fire, the following action should be taken by the responsible person:

a) sound the nearest break-glass Fire Alarm Call Point(s) closest to the location of the room(s) occupied by the people attending the Centre,

b) instruct all persons attending the Centre to evacuate the building in an orderly fashion via the nearest escape route and exit doors to the nearest assembly points. The assembly points are the nearest car parks to the final exit doors. The escape routes are indicated by illuminated fire exit signs and are also shown on the accompanying diagrammatic floor plans.

c) assist in this evacuation, paying particular attention to the needs of persons especially at risk (children, the elderly and the disabled) including escorting them to the assembly points.

d) call the emergency services using your own or other mobile phone. Ensure that you have access to a charged phone with sufficient signal strength to make calls.

e) tackle the fire with the nearest suitable fire extinguishers ONLY if this can be done without increasing personal risk (see also section 5.0 below).

f) advise the emergency services on arrival of any persons who it is believed may still be in the building or who otherwise cannot be accounted for.

g) ONLY return to the building to check for the presence of any other persons when advised by the emergency services that it is safe to do so AND if this can be done without increasing personal risk.

**4.0 Identification of Escape Routes**

4.1 The escape routes are identified on the above plans.

4.2 At the beginning of every event/function the responsible person must ensure that all participants are aware of the location of escape routes and emergency exits associated with the spaces/rooms being occupied in connection with that event/function.

**5.0 Arrangements for Fighting Fire**

5.1 The diagrammatic floor plans above show the locations of the fire extinguishers and other fire safety equipment. The types of fire for which the extinguishers should be used are shown on the extinguishers themselves.

5.2 In addition to fire extinguishers the kitchen also contains a fire blanket and instructions for its use.

5.3 As indicated in section 3.1 above, fires should only be tackled if this can be done without increasing personal risk.

**6.0 Instruction/Training**

6.1 The Centre will ensure that its own staff who are present in the building during an event receive adequately instruction in respect of the use of the fire safety equipment, its locations and the layout of the building, in particular, its escape routes. Furthermore the Centre will ensure that its staff inspect the building at regular intervals to ensure that the fire safety equipment functions properly, that escape routes are not blocked or obstructed and that no final exit doors are locked or cannot function properly.

6.2 The staff or members of the Birchmeadow Centre Management Committee are available to demonstrate the above facilities to hirers of the Centre should the latter so wish prior to the event in question taking place, but in all cases, it is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that a person or persons attending the event in question is/are nominated to undertake the functions of the responsible person contained in this Emergency Plan and are aware of these duties.

Birchmeadow Centre Management Committee 31.07.15